

Longing for Freedom, *Mumukṣutva*¹

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What is *mumukṣutva*?
mokṣo me bhūyāditi icchā.

The *mumukṣu* is the person who wants *mokṣa*, *moktum icchuḥ*. He wants to be free. And he understands that this is exactly what one wants in life, *puruṣārtha*. That is very clear. And that desire to be free is very predominant, so all other desires and pursuits subserve this main pursuit. They should subserve. When that is the main thing in my life, everything subserves it, naturally. It is automatic. You need not do anything about it. That is *viveka*. When the *viveka* is so complete, the understanding so complete, that this becomes the main thing and everything else subserves it, that person is a *mumukṣu*. And his status is called *mumukṣutva*.

So it is not just a desire for a *mokṣa*. Even curiosity can give rise to a desire, but *mumukṣutva* is not a desire for *mokṣa* that is one among many desires. There can be many desires, with the desire for *mokṣa* being one of them. The whole mind is full of desires, and if one of them is *mokṣa*, now and then it gets some attention. This is where *viveka* is required. That is why he uses the word, '*mumukṣutvam*'—it reveals that the whole person is convinced. You are very clear about you want in life. You have turned into a *mumukṣu*. And once you are a *mumukṣu*, your status is called *mumukṣutva*. And

this pursuit does not in any way stand opposed to any other pursuit either.

Mokṣa is not like anything else, so any other pursuit of the *mumukṣu* is also linked to the pursuit of *mokṣa*. A *mumukṣu* is someone who has undergone a change, like a devotee. When a devotee takes up a job, it is the devotee who is an officer. It is not that the devotee is displaced by the officer. The officer is an officer and the devotee is a devotee; it is not like that. The devotee is different. He is someone who has discovered devotion to Īśvara, and therefore, that person, the devoted person, is going to be there in the officer, in the husband, in whatever role he plays;

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he is going to be everywhere. A devotee is a wife, and a devotee is the mother too and the sister. The devotee is always present, as we will see more clearly later. So too, with this *mumukṣu*. And his condition, his disposition of mind is called *mumukṣtva*. Therefore he says that this *mumukṣtva* is a desire, a longing, *icchā*. For what? "May I gain *mokṣa*," *mokṣo me bhūyād*. That means you have to choose *mokṣa*. And the reason you have to choose is that you are already free, *mukta*. When you are already a liberated person, and yet want to be free, you have to choose *mokṣa*. It is in the choice that the pursuit begins. You have to choose.

The four-fold means, *sādhana-catustaya*, for equipping oneself for *mokṣa* are *viveka*, *vairāgya*, *śama dama*, etc., and *mumukṣtva*. *Viveka*, *vairāgya*, *śama dama*, etc., are not enough. That *mumukṣtva* is very important.

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Why is it mentioned separately? Because when *mumukṣtva* is there, if anything is lacking in terms of the other qualifications, you will get that. It is like wanting to do a Ph.D. You equip yourself with the all the things that are necessary to earn the Ph.D., because that is the goal. Once you have that basic aim, you will do the course work, you will do everything that is necessary to qualify yourself to get that Ph.D. It is the same here. *Mumukṣtva* is the main thing. When it is there, *viveka* is already there, so naturally, anything that is lacking anywhere will be gained by you. *Mumukṣtva* has to be separately mentioned because a person can have *śama*, *dama*, etc., without being a *mumukṣu*. And there can be a *mumukṣu* without *śama*, without *dama*, without *uparama*, etc., but he will make sure he takes care of those things.

Once he has this fourfold qualification, *sādhana-catustaya*, he is an *adhikārin*, an eligible student. And it is this eligibility, on the part of the student, that makes the *pramāṇa* very fruitful.

The Vedantic teaching, which is the *pramāṇa* that is handled by a teacher, is fruitful in enlightening a person without requiring any other aid. And it doesn't require any other help, only when the person has this

fourfold qualification. *Ātman* is always ready, and if you are also ready as a person, with the required mind, then the *pramāṇa* will do the job. Like opening the eyes and seeing, the exposure to the teaching will make one free from ignorance of oneself. If these qualifications are lacking in any area, the knowledge can either be denied or inhibited. Knowledge itself can be denied, or the knowledge happens, but at the same time, there is some inhibition so that one doesn't enjoy the fruits of that knowledge. And then, if all the conditions are met, uninhibited knowledge can take place, because the *pramāṇa*, the means of knowledge, is there, and the object of knowledge is there. So the Vedantic teaching being a *pramāṇa* is proved when the person has the eligibility for it. Then there is nothing that can deny that, so the *adhikārin* has to be pointed out. Otherwise, people will say, "I listened to Vedanta and I didn't understand that I am Brahman, therefore, Vedanta is not a *pramāṇa*." That is not valid. It is like saying, "I don't understand calculus, therefore, there is no calculus." That is why one has to be eligible. After that, after gaining this fourfold qualification fully, they become *adhikārins*, eligible, qualified students. Qualified for what? *Tattva-viveka*, discriminative understanding, *viveka*, of what is true, *tattva*.